

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A method for searching a plurality of machine-readable information
sources, said method comprising the steps of:

mapping a search string to a plurality of search terms, wherein each said search term relates
to at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information sources;

indicating at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information sources that each
said search term relates to; and

searching at least one of said indicated machine-readable information sources using selected
ones of said search terms.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, comprising the further steps of receiving said initial search
term from a user and providing a result of said search to said user.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein said step of indicating comprises one
or more of the steps in the group of steps consisting of:

indicating to said user which of said plurality of machine-readable information sources each
of said search terms relates to; and

indicating to said user at least one vocabulary each said search term is included in, wherein
each vocabulary relates to ~~at least~~ one of said information sources.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 3, comprising the further step of enabling said
2 user to select and de-select ones of said plurality of machine-readable information sources whereon
said searching step is performed.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 3, comprising the further step of enabling said
2 user to replace ones of said plurality of search terms with user-selected replacement search terms.

6. (Original) The method of claim 3, comprising the further step of enabling said user to add
2 further search terms to said plurality of search terms.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein each of said plurality of search terms
2 is selected from a vocabulary of terms used in a related one of said plurality of machine-readable
information sources.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of search terms are selected from
2 a meta-vocabulary comprising a list of terms included in a plurality of vocabularies.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said plurality of machine-readable
2 information sources comprise medical databases.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said mapping step is performed once only for
2 searching a particular search string.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said search string comprises a plurality of terms
2 and said step of mapping comprises the step of mapping each of said plurality of terms to a plurality
of synonyms.

12. (Currently amended) An apparatus for searching a plurality of machine-readable information

sources, said apparatus comprising:

a communications interface for transmitting and receiving data;

a memory unit for storing data and instructions to be performed by a processing unit; and

a processing unit coupled to said communications unit and said memory unit, said processing unit programmed to:

map a search string to a plurality of search terms, wherein each said search term relates to at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information sources;

output an indication of at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information sources that each said search term relates to; and

search at least one of said indicated machine-readable information sources using selected ones of said search terms.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said processing unit is further programmed to receive said search string from a user and to output a result of said search to said user.

14. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said processing unit is programmed to perform one or more instructions from the group of instructions consisting of:

indicate which of said plurality of machine-readable information sources each of said search terms relates to; and

indicate at least one vocabulary each said search term is included in, wherein each vocabulary
2 relates to ~~at least~~ one of said machine-readable information sources.

15. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said processing unit is further
2 programmed to enable selection and de-selection of ones of said plurality of machine-readable
information sources whereon said searching is performed.

16. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said processing unit is further
2 programmed to enable user replacement of ones of said search terms with replacement search terms.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said processing unit is further programmed
2 to enable further search terms to be added to said plurality of search terms.

18. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said processing unit is programmed
2 to select each of said search terms from a vocabulary of terms used in a related one of said plurality
of machine-readable information sources.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said processing unit is programmed to select
2 said search terms from a meta-vocabulary comprising a list of terms included in a plurality of
vocabularies.

20. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said plurality of machine-readable
2 information sources comprise medical databases.
21. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said initial search term is mapped once only
2 for searching a particular search string.
22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein said search string comprises a plurality of
2 terms and said processing unit is further programmed to map each of said plurality of terms to a
plurality of synonyms.

23. (Currently amended) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium
2 having a computer program recorded therein for searching a plurality of machine-readable
information sources, said computer program product comprising:

4 computer program code for mapping a search string to a plurality of search terms, wherein
each said search term relates to at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information
6 sources;

computer program code for outputting an indication of at least one of said plurality of
8 machine-readable information sources that each said search term relates to; and

computer program code for searching at least one of said indicated machine-readable
10 information sources using selected ones of said search terms.

24. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising computer program
2 code for enabling a user to submit said initial search term.

25. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein said computer
2 program code for outputting comprises one or more computer program code selected from the group
of computer program code consisting of:

4 computer program code for indicating which of said plurality of machine-readable
information sources each of said search terms relates to; and

6 computer program code for indicating at least one vocabulary each said search term is
included in, wherein each vocabulary relates to ~~at least~~ one of said machine-readable information
8 sources.

26. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising
2 computer program code for enabling selection and de-selection of ones of said plurality of machine-
readable information sources whereon said searching is performed.

27. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising computer program
2 code for enabling replacement of ones of said search terms with replacement search terms.

28. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising computer program
2 code for enabling addition of further search terms to said plurality of search terms.

29. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising
2 computer program code for selecting each of said plurality of search terms from a vocabulary of
terms used in a related one of said plurality of machine-readable information sources.

30. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, further comprising computer program
2 code for selecting said plurality of search terms from a meta-vocabulary comprising a list of terms
included in a plurality of vocabularies.

31. (Currently amended) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein said plurality of
2 machine-readable information sources comprise medical databases.

32. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein said initial search term is
2 mapped once only for searching a particular search string.

33. (Original) The computer program product of claim 23, wherein said search string comprises
2 a plurality of terms and said computer program code for mapping comprises computer program code
for mapping each of said plurality of terms to a plurality of synonyms.

34. (Currently amended) A method for searching a plurality of machine-readable information
2 sources, said method comprising the steps of:

mapping a search string to a plurality of search terms, wherein each said search term relates
4 to at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information sources; and

searching at least one of said machine-readable information sources using selected ones of
6 said search terms.

35. (Currently amended) An apparatus for searching a plurality of machine-readable information

sources, said apparatus comprising:

a communications interface for transmitting and receiving data;

a memory unit for storing data and instructions to be performed by a processing unit; and

a processing unit coupled to said communications unit and said memory unit, said processing

unit programmed to:

map a search string to a plurality of search terms, wherein each said search term relates to

at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information sources; and

search at least one of said machine-readable information sources using selected ones of said

search terms.

36. (Currently amended) A computer program product comprising a computer readable medium
2 having a computer program recorded therein for searching a plurality of machine-readable
information sources, said computer program product comprising:

4 computer program code for mapping a search string to a plurality of search terms, wherein
each said search term relates to at least one of said plurality of machine-readable information
6 sources; and

computer program code for searching at least one of said machine-readable information
8 sources using selected ones of said search terms.